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Stakely
NBI

Lizzie W. J. Martin
from
her friend
April 7th 1879

Stakely
NB1

A

SMALL COLLECTION

OF

ORIGINAL POEMS

BY

CHARLES AVERETTE STAKELY.

ATLANTA, GA.:
BENNETT & WELLS, PRINTERS.
1879.

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PREFACE.

In giving this little book to the people of LaGrange and Troup county, it is but proper for the author to say that he lays no claims to being a poet or to being even poetical. These verses were penned during recesses and at times when he could not do anything else. Not a single piece was written for publication, and it is due to many peculiar influences that the collection is given to his friends in the shape of a book. The volume is not perfection; the first trial of youth has never reached such a distant goal. Besides, the author is working outside of his regular sphere. If there is anything in this little book fit for commendation, well; but if there is anything fit for naught but censure, the author asks but one thing of the people: "the charity of *their* silence."

C. A. S.

DEDICATION.

ALBERT H. COX, ESQ.

Dear Sir,

No man living has done more for me than you have. Taken into your office at a very early age, I have gained from you more than I can ever repay. While you have been too good to ask a recompense, and I too poor to give it, my own young heart has been largely grateful. Of course, in the penning of these trifles, I have not taken a moment from those studies which I came into your office to pursue. Most of the pieces were written before I entered upon the profession of my life, and the balance when midnight had called me from the tedious law-page The offering is defective, but you stand in a better position to overlook its defects than any one else. The tribute is simple, but the best I have: take it as a public acknowledgment of my deepest gratitude.

Very truly yours,

CHAS. A. STAKELY.

LAGRANGE, GEORGIA,

December, 1878.

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POEMS.

DID SHE DIE TOO SOON?

A MONODY ON THE DEATH OF MISS JULIA MCWHORTER.

WE hang an eye upon the sad, low moon
And lean a heart against a thorn of grief;
We think the silver cord was clipp'd too soon,
And Heav'n was hard to make her call so brief.

Earth can not keep a thing of beauty long;
It dies as quick as dies the breath of May.
When in the heart a sweet is dearly strong,
A greedy angel steals it right away.

The fairest creatures have the shortest lives ;
  Perhaps, like pets, we fondle them to death :
'Tis known from over-care the pet derives
  A something that will suck away its breath.

Earth ever wants what she can never keep,
  A thing of beauty or a thing that's rare ;
She never wants what she can ever reap,
  A common blossom or an ugly care.

We get from Heav'n the Lily and the Rose,
  And earth is not to them a genial land:
The plant is in the soil; and never grows
  A lily but in beds of lily sand.

The soil must have the rose's elements
  Before the rose can living spring to sight ;
Before it wears a dozen brighter tints,
  The rose must blossom in a purer light.

The soil of earth's a bed of golden woe,
Unfit to plant a rose of Aiden in;
The only hues a petal gets below
Are midnight touches from the brush of sin.

We said she died too soon, the fair and sweet
(The heart was dropping then a moonlight tear.)
Our thought now is, her early death was meet;
We wonder why herself was *ever* here.

An eye too bright to shine below the stars,
A voice too sweet below the Angel's mirth;
A face too calm for sorrow's daily jars,
A soul too white to catch the dust of earth.

We would not keep her from the sweet Above
To weary thro' a life of mortal aims;
Our love is weaker than the Father's love,
Our claims on her are nought to Jesus' claims.

The earth would blush to make her feeble plea
  Where angel tongues present the claims of Heav'n
The court is hid beyond the twinkling sea,
  And there the pleas of earth are never giv'n.

Our Plea, O God! is weaker far than Thine;
  Or, rather, ours would be no plea at all;
To Thy good will we make a full resign
  And speed the Fair beyond a mourner's call.

TO MR. & MRS. W. J. McCLURE,

ON THE DEATH OF THEIR FIRST-BORN.

COULD the monster lift a hand
To pluck from out your little band
Its parents' only pride?

'Tis but in days of infancy
The soul that lives on earth is free
From error's purple tide.

Then weep not for your little one,
But let your Father's will be done
To that his hand hath giv'n;

Your bud was not to bloom on earth
For here God only gave it birth
To rise and bloom in Heav'n.

Among the angels it now sings,
A seraph's golden trump it rings
Amid Elysian charms;

In garments pure and sweetly bright
It sits and laughs in young delight
In Jesus' tender arms.

A DYING MOTHER'S PLAINT.

IT came from the lowliest hut in the valley,
It rose as the plaint of a swan;
The cry of a soul in the chain of a galley,
It came as an echo comes, broken and coy,
A piteous medley of sorrow and joy,—
A widow's importunate moan:

O heavy and sad is the tear of a mother,
That falls on the life of a son!
I gave him a love that I offered no other,
I gave him the blessings of tenderest care,
I gave him a home that was happy and rare
And sorrow's the premium won.

The son of my heart was the sun of my morning,
The trust of my life was my boy ;
The laugh of his eye was my daylight returning,
The shine of his soul, my meridian ray,
The flush of his face was the close of my day,
The joy of his spirit my joy.

The daughter I love; but the son was my only
Consoling endearment of earth :
But now he is gone and the widow is lonely,—
He's gone and the daylight has follow'd him off ;
The nimbus of sorrow is hung in the roof
That smiled on the boy at his birth.

The hope of my heart was the willing assistance
He'd give in my season of snow ;
The season is present—he lives in the distance;
Or, may be, he sleeps in a foreigner's grave,
Or, may be, he sleeps on the lap of the wave,—
I know not—I'm dying to know.

The path of his morning I sprinkled with roses
That fed on the dews of my love;
The rest of his evening I made as the moss is
That covers the bank of a tropical stream;
My kindnesses wrought but the shade of a dream
As sad as the moan of a dove.

The birth of the boy was the birth of a promise;
I gave him to Heaven—to God:
"The vineyard of God he shall take for a home" is
The pledge of my soul to the Lord of my soul.
How meet it?—he's gone from a mother's control;
The mother is under the rod.

The home that he knew is the home of a stranger,
The house he was born in is gone;
They sold it for taxes and gave me a manger,
A kennel of dirt in the corner of woe;
The waves of adversity over me go,
The zephyr of pleasure is done.

The sumptuous board and the beautiful raiment
Were lost with the sacred old home ;
For commonest food we can hardly make payment,
The rag of the servant my daughter now wears,
The drudge of the slave is the burden she bears,
The light of her spirit is—gloom.

O Thou, the Dispeller of weeping and sorrow,
Do hasten my summer of joy!
O curtain the past and illumine the morrow!
Deprive me of raiment and every-day bread,
Bereave me of light and the sky overhead,
But save me—O Father—my boy.

I'm dying—O, lend me an angel to send him
A plea of importunate love.
"*Your mother and sister*"—O let it attend him
A morsel of memory feeding his heart.
I'm dying—take daughter as soon as I part ;
My son—let him kiss me above !

I gladly forgive them—(The ones who bereft her
The joys of the family place.)
I love him—(The darling who wantonly left her.)
Forgive him O Father! I freely forgive;—
O peaceful—no sorrow—my spirit can live—
She died with a smile on her face.

* * * * * *

No virtue can shine in a frown of displeasure
Or live in a bosom of hate;
The planet of charity grows in its measure
Of glory and heat when a christian departs;
The heart to forgive is the warmest of hearts,
It burns in the moment of fate.

How calm is the death of the nobly victorious
Who die in the peace of the Lord!
How sweet is the ride from the world to the Glorious
On pinions of beauty, as soft as a breath!
How fair is the road from the work to the wreath,
From sorrow to happy reward!

Ye Foolish, who feed on the spirit of Darwin,
Go witness the death of a saint!
Go stand by the bed of a confident Marvin
And measure the peace of his soul as it leaves!
The beautiful hope Christianity weaves,
The halo ineffable, paint!

The hovel of want is a portal to Heaven,
As night is a tunnel to day;
Go taste of the bitter in poverty's leaven!
Go bury the soul in the briers of want!
Go drink of the gall in adversity's font!
This done, you are able to say

How glad to the poor is the moment of dying.
—No sorrow should fill it—no tear;
The season of living 's the moment for crying.
A sob—in a life that is beaded in grief;
A laugh—in the moment of sweetest relief,
When God and His angels are near.

The heaviest battles are those of the bosom:
The victories won in the breast
Are noble and glorious; if man would expose 'm,
They'd brighten the glory of many a plain
Where valor in measure with valor was slain
And valor wore victory's crest.

O mad is a gale on the face of the ocean!
But madder a storm in the soul.
The ships of the heart, on the breast of commotion,
Are bared in a fury to sailors unknown;
The sacredest burden is oft overthrown
To save from the loss of the whole.

She nobly forgave. In the war of her bosom
The soldiers of charity won;
The trophies of peace—she was glad to disclose 'm—
The smile on her face and the hope in her eye,
The thought of a beautiful home in the sky,
With mother and daughter and son.

She nobly forgave. And the storm that was raging
Across the dark main of her soul
Had lull'd into peace; and the wind that was waging
Had sunk to a zephyr that carried a balm;
The ships of her heart had rejoiced in the calm;—
She parted from sorrow's control.

DEAD BUT FAIR.

COME, let us lift the pall again
And view that handsome face.
Behold! those features yet retain,
Tho' dead, that noble grace,
That rosy flush without a stain
Or single pallid trace.

Indeed his living self is there,
Without a print of death;
That auburn glory seems to wear
The freshness of a wreath;
That form is still the calm and fair—
He only needs his breath.

The boy can be but in a dream
And with some rosy maid;
Or smiling by some happy stream
That ripples in a shade.
His breath will soon return to him—
Or sure the boy would fade.

His lips invite a mother's kiss:
A sister's pearly tear
Upon his cheek would be amiss,
There is no sadness near.
His features wear the touch of bliss
They've worn for many a year.

* * * * * *

O stainless as a lover's vow!
The happy dream is o'er;
The pale of death is on his brow.
And on the other shore
His fairer self is happy now
And bright forevermore.

THE HUMAN HEART.

HE saw the gracious rope;—
A night of storm was o'er the raging main,
And manfully he bore against the wave:
He tried to catch—and missed—and tried again.
—And all his heart was hope.

'Twas caught but failed to bear.
The darker night and stronger wave had come
To drive the rope and struggling man apart;
The next big wave would seal his awful doom.
—His heart was all despair.

A ship had lost her path,
Another ship that rode the midnight wave:
Her beacon shows the man in low despair,
And quick she stops to rob the ocean grave.
—And all his heart was faith.

The noble chain dropped out,

And brought to welcome arms the stranger form.

A league of peace—and all the winds returned,

The vessel groaned amid a mightier storm.

—And all his heart was doubt.

The storm itself did cloy;

The morning broke upon a calmer trip;

A smile of gladness met the morning light,

And praise went up to God who saved the ship.

—And all his heart was joy.

The dance of joy was brief:

The fair young man on deck the day before,

Now mid the blue, was but the darling son

The stranger kissed upon the distant shore.

—And all his heart was grief.

As gentle as a dove,
A sweet young girl sat near him all the day:
She talked, and played sweet music in his ear,
And softly sung to drive his grief away.
—And all his heart was love.

The sad unfortunate,
When fever laid him in the arms of sleep,
The cruel master jerked him from the berth
And, cursing, put him where the deck hands keep.
—And all his heart was hate.

The stranger could not live:
Too weak to bear the deck-hands' iron load,
He sank with hotter fever in his veins,
And begged a full forgiveness of his God.
—His heart was all forgive.

"Let in the sweeter breeze,
The morning light once more before I die!"
He looked upon the great blue wave again,
And left the ship, to wing the brighter sky.
—And all his heart was ease.

DAVID:

A TRAGIC BALLAD.

PART FIRST.

THE two were only *boys* and each had felt
The breath of eighteen Mays upon the face;
In Clifton by the ocean wave they dwelt,
And each did boast himself a higher race.

The one, Eugene: and he was strong and brave.
He bent his powers to the voice of worth;
He read his mission in the harvest wave
And gave his life to labor in the earth.

His eye would glory on the golden corn;
The neigh of stock was music to his ear;
And independence of the furrow born
Was *his* true worship thro' the faithful year.

The other, David; brilliant, soft and fair.

His life had been a dream in sunny bowers;

It was his hope to dream his future there,

And link his soul with poetry and flowers.

He sought to live the higher life below.

And bent his mind to play the harp of love;

His glove was on to swing the silver bow,

To try an arrow at a tender dove.

Tho' quite unlike in nature and in aims,

In some respects they had the same incline:

On things of love Eugene had very claims,

And David's claims were verily as fine.

On things of beauty they had similar eyes;
Their hearts were just alike on pretty girls;
They both admired a rainbow in the skies
And Lucie Ray with bonny cheeks and curls.

They breathed a like devotion for the maid;
Subsisted on the tales she told to each:
For holy truth was put in all she said,
And each with her was 'bove the other's reach.

Fair Lucie Ray was of that evil sort
Admiring most the last young man she met;
She thought the world of one as he would court,
Despised the other (he not present yet).

When present, she would hate the former worse
Than any dog that woke the sleeping town;
And vow him dearer than her life, of course,
Who sat beside her on the parlor down.

Eugene could read she loved him, in her ways,
And David here a love for him could shew;
On that her eye did throw congenial rays,
On this the same peculiar rays it threw.

And each had writ she loved himself the best—
Had writ it on the pages of his heart;
In cunning ways they made the frequent test;
She stood the test without a sign of art.

Eugene did pluck the fairest of his yield
And by the silver moon did bring to her.
"Eugene—she said—Apollo of the field,
I *have* become your happy worshiper."

Then David came—with harp and heart he came;
He swept the cord and sung his love to her.
"And well—she said—you carry David's name;
I *have* become your glad idolater."

She kept her heart and gave her hand to both:
(The silly maiden had no heart at all.)
The day was set for taking Hymen's oath,
And it was near the dying of the Fall.

Then each was glad nor dreamed the other glad:

"No matter now for I have got her hand,

And I have won the virgin love she had;

I'll have the prettiest wife in all the land!"

The rill of love 's the strangest rill that flows:

An alien feather dropt upon its cheek

Will wake the eddies from a still repose

To furious anger and impetuous freak.

It was a night of revelry and joy,

When love was high and hope was in a smile;

She told Eugene himself was her annoy,

And chattered with her David all the while.

The slight was poison to his angry soul:

"A week ago she gave her hand to me,

And smiling, pledged herself to my control;

Was her annoy? and sure it can not be—

"It can not be that she, herself, could change

The smile of fondness to the frown of hate;

The rascal talked of me; and full revenge

My heart will take of him or take its fate!"

It was a day—a gala day of youth,

When care had fled and all the heart was fun:

She said to David: "Stop your hateful mouth!"

And heard Eugene, beyond the setting sun.

The cruel arrow flew to David's breast:

Nor could he tell how one, so late had giv'n

Her love and life to him, could him detest;

Nor why herself the cruel shaft had driv'n.

"She never *dreame l* a slight for me before;

She ever sung the prelude to the wife:

The *dog* has brushed my former standing o'er,

And I'll avenge me if to take his life!"

Love can not reason but can ever brew,

And mill-stones make of bubbles ether light;

This hate of each, by aggravation, grew,

And blossom'd in a malice dark as night.

Each went resolved to lay his rival down
When fatal chance had set for them to meet;
The dire intent was thro' the city known,
And was the common gossip of the street.

PART SECOND.

BE careful Bob! this wood is full of game:
But Friday eve, and faithful Rover treed
Three large ones in a gum. A steady aim
Brought one; a snap the others freed.

I never saw her fail but once before,

And Pa was trying then towing a lark;

The day was damp and clouds were hanging o'er,

The tube was wet and—that was Rover's bark!

I'll take the hill—you creep along the fence;

The bark was over on the western edge:

Be soft upon the leaves and use your sense,

Don't fire too quick—don't take my privilege.

* * * * * * * * * *

My God! there lies a man in death and blood!

His eyes terrific in a dead arrest!

His hair all matted in a gory flood!

And red still oozing from his clotted breast!

Eugene?—'tis he—and murdered in his prime!
The face is his—I know the features well;—
O bloody fruit of that stupendous crime
Whose doer scarce should have a place in hell!

A lightning speed! and let the city know
The horror and the crime Eugene is dead—
Eugene lies murdered in the wood below—
Bring others to the scene—a lightning speed!

* * * * * * * * *

Eugene is dead!—a sister paled and wept;
Eugene is dead!—a mother's heart was broke:
Eugene is dead!—a wild excitement leapt
In every heart and cords of sorrow woke.

The path was crowded to the scene of death
And old men took the fields—a nearer way;
"Outrageous deed!—was voiced in every breath—
And we will make the felon dearly pay!"

"A scene too dark for him whose locks are white—
A father cried, and wiped away a tear—
"There is a God who loves a full requite:
He'll give a clue to *him* who laid him here."

"Look! there 's the guilty weapon by the tree:
An open thing against the murd'ring one;
Forgot, when guilt was warning him to flee;
The user's own detection—David's gun!"

"And sure it is. I know the figured stock;
Young David *only* had a foreign cast:
A thousand times I've tried the splendid lock,
And—he was in this wood on Monday last!

"For, on that day my Weekly News was torn;
My little Edwin said he tore the page
For David's wadding, early in the morn,
And saw him fire among *that* yellow sage."

"Preserve the wad beside the bloody form,
For it may tell a hidden story yet."
"It reads:—'and spoke the living truth. The warm—'
The very words it had—a perfect fit."

"When first we came to see th' infernal wrong,
Young David (strange to say!) refused to come;
Reluctantly, he joined the second throng,
But shun'd the bloody corpse and hurried home."

"But crowning all and—I remember still
How long he nursed in him an open spleen;
And Clifton knows the dark resolve to kill,
The midnight malice David bore Eugene."

* * * * * * * * * *

The hand of cold arrest is on the youth,
And fair-faced David clanks the felon's chain;
The butt of scorn, he sits where holy truth
And justice fair in awful silence reign.

The one that bore him sits upon his left,

And sits to hide a million crystal drips;

The sister too of all her joy bereft:

A sweet "not guilty" passes thro' his lips.

A town of prejudice is for the State,

And old men sneer the blue-eyed felon's plea;

No heart of pity beats for David's fate,

And only two to have the darling free.

A deep suspense is in a hundred souls

As witness after witness lips the Book;

As each a stronger confirmation rolls,

"Thou art the man" is writ in every look.

The jury drinks the poison of the crowd,
  Suspicion makes the testimony large;
No reasonable doubts to be allow'd,
  They find young David guilty of the charge.

"The solace of my widow'd heart—my only boy—
  Found guilty of the darkest crime on earth!
He never had a soul for such employ;—
  The charge is false! I've known him from birth."

"My mother—my sweet mother! they have said
  Your son is guilty of his rival's blood;
But they have been thro' prejudice misled;
  Your boy is *innocent* before his God!"

* * * * * * * * * *

The morning sun is on a weeping day.

"Young David stand! twelve honest men and true
Have said you killed Eugene. Have you to say
Why sentence just should not be passed on *you?*"

"My own fair face will say it all for me:
I could not hide a guilt in David's heart;
For it would ope its own deep secrecy,
And to his face the shining guilt would dart.

"*I did not kill Eugene.* The dark offense
Is thrown upon the guiltless and the young:
When I am gone you'll read my innocence."
The tearless boy was sentenced to be hung.

PARD THIRD.

THE morn of death—of murder by the law—
O'er Clifton hung, a morn of anxious life;
And thro' the bar the blue-eyed felon saw
The crowding friends, and heard the murm'ring strife

He looked awhile, and turned him from the sight
And from the cry of bleeding pity there;
And buried in the dungeon's awful night,
He poured his broken soul to God in pray'r.

"O God—my father's God—my mother's God,
And now the God of their illfated son!
Sustain me in the path my Saviour trod,
(The path to shame,) with stainless garments on.

"They swing me in the guilty ropes to-day:
I leave a mother and a sister, poor;
Protect them God in life's long desert way,
And nourish them when want is at the door.

"Let not my fate pollute the family name,
Nor prattle make, nor curl the lip of scorn;
Let not my sister wear her brother's shame,
Nor mother, the disgrace her son has worn.

"My mother's hope is in a felon's grave;
On earth her darling self will ever pine:
O call her soon where angel pinions wave,
Where all is peace and every form divine

"I wear the shame, who never did the crime:
My guiltless heart a God of mercy knows;
When I am gone beyond the sweep of time,
Declare the truth O God! to friends and foes.

"Forgive them, God, who laid the charge to me,
And who the awful verdict gladly will'd;
Too human they to seal a destiny;
They kill a man because a man is kill'd.

"But take from me the heart of mad complaint,
And let me see the purpose of the rod;
Let Clifton read above my foul attaint:
'He died in ropes but in the arms of God.'"

He throws a vision thro' the bars again
And strikes the dear companions of his heart:
To him returns the purple thorn of pain,
And back he goes to nurse the fearful smart.

O God! they're now but in the March of youth,
The mates I loved when I was gay and free:
O bring them to that pure and holy growth
That blooms the bud a perfect man in Thee.

O set me up, a case to warn them by:
Not guilty, yet I'll take the murd'rer's place;
When David hangs beneath the morning sky,
O weigh for them the lead of low disgrace.

"But, Father, when the fuller time appears,
When David sleeps beneath the lonely tomb,
O grant me this, that they will sprinkle tears
Acknowledging the error of my doom!"

A tender voice was heard without the door,
That raised the praying felon from his knees;
His soul had that gentle voice before:
"O Davie, come and let me see you, please."

He clasped the weeping sister to his breast,
Upon her cheek he put a dying kiss;
The kiss he doubled, and he closer press'd:
"I'd gladly die in such a hug as this!"

"'Tis hard to give you up, my sister dear,
A task but iron law could bring me to:
The law can work to break our meeting here,
But not to break a brother's heart from you.

"I'll walk in ropes to yonder distant Bright,
And I will be no hated felon there;
I'll send you kisses on the morning light
And waft you love among the evening air.

"But tell me, sister, does my mother weep?
And will she come to see her 'prisoned hope,
Her darling son before he falls asleep?
Or will she go to see the fatal drop?"

"Our mother seems as on a bed of death;
She speaks as tho' she were a little child:
She finds it very hard to draw a breath,
And speaks of you in whispers low and wild."

The felon wept.—A moment more did yield
His person to the ruffians of the law:
—Unmoved, he stands within the gallows field
And fills the anxious multitude with awe.

The final tear had purpled on his cheek
And in his eye the fire of courage hung:
"*I did not kill Eugene!* the law will wreak
Its fury on the guiltless and the young.

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T

That cruel arrow flew to David's breast.

Nor could he tell how one so like an angel;

Had love and life to hill, could kill them so.

Nor why herself the cruel shaft must die.

"She never dreamed [illegible]

She ever still the [illegible]

The day has [illegible]

And [illegible]

Love can [illegible]

And m[illegible]

This hate of [illegible]

And bloom[illegible]

Four years have zephyred o'er his mother's grave:
She wasted 'neath the press of winter grief:
One morning ere the sun had lit the wave,
The angels brought her death and sweet relief.

Two years have kissed her in a distant land,
Who kissed the boy the morning of his doom;
She wandered to a stranger's open hand
And found a father in a father's home.

Fair Lucie Ray still holds her envied place
As Clifton's belle with wondrous pow'r to charm;
A deeper beauty summers in her face
And time has brought the woman to her form.

The man is now upon the wanton boys
That whiled with David ere the felon died;
They look aloft and pant for manly joys
And yearn to lay the dreams of youth aside.

The same gray hairs, that charged the blue-eyed youth,
Are here, but bending with a final white;
The Twelve are here, who burrow'd for the truth;
And easy, o'er a verdict surely right.

The same blue sky is here—the same blue deep
That bore a welcome steam-bird to the beach;
But now the bars another felon keep,
And David's cell now holds another wretch.

A fearless diver in the waves of sin,
He lies in shame beneath a double count:
For burglary in yonder public inn,
And brutal murder 'cross the little mount.

The former crime the aged man confess'd,
And in the latter proof of guilt was clear;
As on his mind the mortal sentence pressed:
"My God, the punishment I *will* not bear!"

The jailer mocked the old man's trembling word:
"'Tis but a pool in which to drown his fear."
But oft at night the sleepless jailer heard:
"My God, the punishment I *will* not bear."

"I'm old at keeping jail—the jailer thought—
  Tis better just to let the old man swear."
Again his ear the midnight mutt'ring caught:
  "My God, the punishment I *will* not bear!"

"He needs a crib in which to rock his pain;
  His hand can find no dangerous weapon near."
In smothered groans the sentence comes again:
  "My God, the punishment I *will* not bear!"

The jailer laughed.—The morning came too late,
  For night had sent the hidden poison down;
The old man leaned against the dungeon gate:
  "Ah, they'll not have it—I will take mine own!"

* * * * * * * * *

wind.

fed.

rove;

limb,

grove.

O Jailer, put my final words in ink!
My work of crime shall finish on myself
I've spent a life in crime's infernal sink;
Three men I've shot for nothing else than pelf.

A boy, I walked the streets of Applewood,
And answered to the name of Wallace Hey;
I had a mother sweet to me and good,—
But, Jailer, I was born to disobey.

I left her home and joined a wicked clan;
I joined another, and another still:
With them, from stealth to darker deed I ran,
And found I knew the bloody trade to kill.

My fellows now infest the woods around,
But while I breathe my tongue 'll speak no names;
My field of crime no eagle eye could bound,
No anchor sound my deep, felonious aims.

O dark the scene before my burning mind!
I now can see the poor boy deep in red;
My ears can catch the groans that rode the wind,
Ere these hard clutches on his beauty fed.

Six years ago, or very near that time,
In yon extended wood I chanced to rove;
I watched a youth the little risings climb,
And seat himself within the silent grove.

'Twas Tuesday eve. My outer coat conceal'd
A gun my partner stole the night before.
—Alone, he said: "To-day I sold my yield,"
And then began to count his money o'er.

I knew my trade; and quick as thought: "your gold!"
He manly spoke, and had no look of scare,
But gave a presence ready, strong and bold:
—I shot at once and laid him bleeding there.

Some plowmen laughing woke the road along,
And seemed to take a meaning path to me;
In wildest fear, I fled the Hellish wrong,
And left the gun beside a neighb'ring tree.

My darkest crime! (God knows I speak the truth.)
I cannot draw me from the bloody scene!
In Hell my eyes will hold that murder'd youth,—
I knew him not—he called himself Eugene.

* * * * * * * * *

But *few* remained to hear the old man thro';
(A crowd had got before the narrow cell.)
The strange confession o'er the city flew,
And on the homes the pall of sorrow fell.

The gray accuser shed the burning tear;
The jury hid to nurse a woe intense;
The heart of Clifton, sorrowing, did rear
The marble page to David's innocence.

NOTES ON A RECENT SINGING.

"I WOULD if I were you"—
How gracefully she sang it!
Her mouth a merry bell,
How charmingly she rang it!
Her smile entrancing—well,
'Twas never beat; but hang it!
She wore a crying shoe.

"I would if I were you"—
She looked as if she meant it;
Her bright and holy eye
A double meaning lent it;
Her virgin majesty
Was pleasing; but to print it,
She wore a crying shoe.

"I would if I were you"—
The looms of Heav'n deliver
Than her no sweeter grace;
The generous Gods could give her
No purer, happier face
Or form; but, Jeems's River!
She wore a crying shoe.

REPLY TO A LETTER IN VERSE,

WRITTEN FOR A FRIEND.

AN arrow was shot from the bow of the Fair,
'Twas dipp'd in the "Otto of Roses;"
It laughingly sped through the honeying air
And lowered where Welcome reposes.

The archeress weary with arrows of prose,
Now chooses a missile that's better;
She happily trims it and merrily throws
A highly poetical letter.

Ah, prose never carries what poetry breathes,
The heart in its holiest measure;
The petals of love she entrancingly wreathes
In fanciest garlands of pleasure.

She buries her pen in the ink of the heart,
And spreads it on flowery pages;
She gladdens the mind with a frolicsome art,
The bosom she, laughing, engages.

Of course I accept it—accept it from one
Whose happiest wishes attend it;
And now that her poesy's fairly begun,
I hope she'll continue to send it.

THE HERO OF BRISLINGTON TUNNEL.

THE "Flying Dutchman's" angry breath
Along the track was heard;
A hundred souls will come to death
As quick as dies a word!

So swiftly down th' embankment made
A man, with terror pale,
To move the heavy stone that laid
Its corner 'cross the rail.

At home, he had a darling wife,
But now no thought of her;
'Twas his, tho' he should lose his life,
To save each passenger.

He had a brood of children sweet
As fairies in a dream;
But now they get no father's greet
Thro' memory's golden beam.

With Titan's nerve and strength combined,
He quickly bends his back,
And round the stone his arms entwined,
He lifts it from the track.

The "Flying Dutchman" quickly sped
  Along and then was gone;
But left the hero mangled, dead,
  Near by the lifted stone.

Forever let this story live
  A souvenir of the brave;
One man his life did freely give
  His fellow man's to save.

EXPERIENCE.

SUPREMELY enraptured,
I came to the banks of the river of love.
  The silvery shallops were lilies at rest;
  The oars were of silver the brighest and best,
And fixed in the beautiful fairy-made glove.

The rowers were maidens in whitest of white;
  Their foreheads were chaplets of colorless rose;
  Their cheeks were alive in a pinkish repose:
Their eyes were mesmeric in ravishing light.

"Unhappy, aboard!"—like the velvet refrain
Of Paradise birds o'er the sweet river rung.
"We'll ferry thee off with a mellowing song,
We'll ferry thee back with a beautiful strain."

I thought that these sweetnesses meant what they said:
"We'll charge thee no money; we'll ferry thee free."
I, hearing this fully, agreed to agree;
In confidence, entered the shallop and fled.

The wavelets gave back for the swift-moving bird;
The eddies delighted leapt ring into ring;
And Zephyrus, laughing, in musical swing
Waved o'er us and nothing but music was heard.

The breezes were music, and music the waves;
The rowers were music, and music the oars
As glitt'ring they looked to the flowery shores
Where softly in music the shrubbery laves.

I thought this was Paradise holy and sweet,
Relief for the troubled, a balm for the tired:
I thought this could furnish the home I desired,
Where beauty and music and loveliness meet.

Its beauty entranced me—it proved to be gall;

Its music allured me—it arrowed my heart;

Its promises fooled me—a rattlesnake art;

It robb'd me of time of my money and all.

And thus was I captured.

THE BROKEN TRYST:

A DREAM.

O SWEETLY Robed! from yonder land
To Fancy dear,
If true you wear a form come stand
Beside me near,
And let me tell, as you demand,
My *wherefore* here.

Not long ago a noble boy,
Beside this fence
Was kindly standing, filled with joy
And innocence,
While o'er his forehead play'd a coy,
Sweet diffidence.

In purer smiles of morning wrapt,
A virgin too:
And while the billing turtle propt
Its gentle coo,
In willing ears he softly dropt
A zephyr woo.

When sweet enchantment tied in one
Their burning hearts,
They met each evening ere the sun
Had left these parts,
To chide each other—pure the fun—
With Flora's arts.

One evening when they left yon swing,
So satisfied
That Hymen would across them fling
His mantle wide,
An evil snake dealt Oscar sting,
From which he died.

This evening when the darting bat
Begins to sail,
Fair Maudelin, with rosy plait,
Will come to hail
Her Oscar—waving rustic hat
Upon the gale.

Although afraid that I may break
The harmony
Of strings about her heart, which wake
To ecstacy
The lyric parts of life, and make
Her heavenly,

Yet, I am now as messenger,
Upon this heath,
And when she, strolling, cometh near,
Quite underneath
This drooping oak, I'll speak to her
Of Oscar's death.

My lips will fail before the task,—
I know them well:
The fear that's o'er me, like a mask,
I can't dispel;
And one dear thing of thee I ask,
A *how* to tell

To one of maiden tenderness
The sudden blight
Of *him*, her flower, ransomless
And strangely bright,
To her sweet soul a sweet caress,
And sweeter light.

"O child of earth,—it answering said—
The whitest heart,
By Heav'n declared the whitest, fed
Itself in part
To sorrow's epicures and bled
In cruel smart.

"O child of earth, the whitest soul
By earth declared
The whitest, waits for griefs to roll
Across it bared,
As black regrets to gain control
Await prepared.

"O child of earth, there still remains
A gracious way
(Tho' hearts are locked in sorrow's chains
From day to day,)
In which the soul can draw from pains
A glad'ning ray."

Enough, enough! obliging spright;
Your gentle words
Have made my darkness light;
And light affords
A good and pleasant *hour*. A night
Of sorrow hoards

For those who take it hard, the stings
Of blackest hurt
Incurable; who, easy, wings
Of eagle port
To rise above the grievous things
Of leaden sort.

Behold! the wary bats begin
The wing-ed play;
Beyond the turn gay Maudelin,
In sweet array
Of girlish innocence, is seen
(The rose of May!)

In quick and merry pace to meet
The waiting one:
(His death to her untold as yet.)
A paragon
With priceless excellence replete,
And fairer?—none.

Her queenly beauty stops awhile;
Selecting now
From out a floral patch, a smile,
A labial vow,
Not flow'rs, for *emblems* reconcile
The overflow.

Of fondness' pure and holy stream:
And she forgets
The blossom's purple robe, in dream
Of how it fits
To hand "Forget me not" to him
In violets.

And now her arm (than which the grace
Or gentle turn
Of sleeping lilies on the face
Of clear Lucerne
Partakes of perfect beauty less,)
Is upward borne,

A waving symbol raising high
For him to see,
And seeing, make a like reply:
A jubilee
Of mutual hearts to signify,
Or harmony.

Approaching near and nearer yet,
Her mellow voice
(I wonder how the angels let
So sweet a noise
Remain so long on earth to whet
The blunted joys

Of nought enjoying man, when Heav'n
Appreciates
A soothing melody!) is giv'n
In dubious rates
Of wavering loudness forth, and driv'n
To where awaits

In kind suspense a kindly ear.
Her chalices
Which drink the visible and share
To faculties
About her brow, a portion dear
And ransomless

If lost; than which th' ascended soul
Of *him* could find
No sweeter, nicer theme to roll
Within his mind,
Or from his constant lips let fall
Plain underlin'd,

Can now the trysting spot drink in.
The rustic rail
And viny swing, as lately, 'gin
To her the tale
Of yestereve and fancies pen
"Prophetical."

Across it odd proceedings. "Four
Delusive eves
Have hid the sparrow neath its bow'r
Of summer leaves
In deep and holy rest, secure
From wary thieves,

"Since last in merry attitude
His presence rose
To catch and hold my sight: nor cou'd
It interpose
A lovelier, better self; nor wou'd
It deign to lose

"The eager sight of eager love
So shortly long
As hiding (meek surprise to prove)
The leaves among
Requires. Alike the moaning dove
When fatal wrong

"Has burst the cord of mated joys,
My bosom tells
That filching disappointment cloys
Her gloomy cells
With goods (the loss of which destroys).
From out the wells

"In which the spirit's diamond sand
Is deeply stay'd:
Uneasiness, the brusing wand
Of doubt, is laid
Across my bosom's rest, too bland
As yet, to jade.

"But when O heart, will blandness change
To cruel weight,
And press thee down in black revenge
Or blacker hate?
Ye holy aids! a time so strange,
So hard, belate!"

A talk to self when self alone
Can hear the talk,
Bespeaks, intruth, the genuine tone
Of feelings' shock
Or ease. I'll hear it all. That done,
I'll join her walk.

"In beauty shed the lingering beam
Of yellow eve
Remains to take of wood and stream
Its weeping leave;
But I, in leaden thought of *him*,
Can only give

"A cold and sad adieu in turn.
When heretofore
This lucid remnant fain would urn
Its vital pow'r
In parting kiss, a parting burn
My spirit bore:

"For, when to join the rolling day
Beyond the West,
It kissing, flew, his homeward way
Was quickly press'd,
And we would break our sweet delay
At his request."

At sight of me the sudden rose
Exponent meek
Of blushing fear, in pink repose
Upon her cheek
Of stainless beauty, gently blows
A "hide and seek,"

The passing off and coming back
Of dimple lints;
And red surprise is wide awake
T' allusive hints,
As finder, jovial on the track
Of innocents.

"O, Robert!—Robert, have you heard"—
Your strangely sad
And grave soliloquy?—each word.
Conceal'd I had
In perfect sight your face bestir'd,
In trouble clad."

"Alas!—Behold yon rocky heap!
Its hugeness low'rs
A shadow black, in blackness deep,
Across the flow'rs
Which bloom around its base. I weep
Because the pow'rs

"Of gloomy shade, in greedy haste,
Are covering
The morning sheen that used to cast
A merry Spring
Upon my heart. The sinful waste,
The vanishing,

"Of quiet's golden day is known
When o'er the bed
Where lilies of the heart are grown
And nimbly wed
The shadow of regret is thrown,
On beauties fed."

I know, sweet girl, the hidden fount
Of all your grief
And flood of tears: then truly count
My message brief
A reconciling tool. Th' amount
Of heart relief

Is great or small as persons make
It. So of pain;
A good, but demonized to break
The silver chain
Of weak control and, raving, take
The fallen rein,

That souls may find a better queen,
And kinder far,
In reinstated ease. The scene
Of noiseless war
By sorrow daily waged is green
Nor seeks to mar

The captured heart when, like the God,
Adown it bends
To own the uses of the rod.
Regret attends
The child of clay till neath the sod
His body ends.

Suppose the fairest plant in yard
Which fondness minds,
Be bruised about its neck by hard,
Unconscious winds
Till nigh to dying. Close regard
My flower finds

When drooping or when nearly killed:
I like the plant
Alive, would rather have it heal'd
By death than want
The grace and form of living build,
And elegant"

Suppose your linnet meanly struck
("Defenseless thing!")
And from the unrelenting shock
A severed wing
Results. "If curable, I'd rock
Its suffering

"To velvet ease: If otherwise,
I'd take its breath.
The sense of corp'ral aching flies
At touch of death.
Its name I'd book; its coat I'd prize
In mem'ry's wreath."

Suppose the one than whom the best
Of noble forms
Is by you cherished less be cast
In purple arms
Of loathsome poison nigh the test
Of deadly harms.

"How sad the case! I'd weep the tears
That friendship pulls
From out the spirits mine, were fears
Or hopes the tools
That make decision. Life endears,
By golden rules,

"The heart of clay to heart of clay:
Then o'er the *thought*
My kindred soul would mournful stay
Till angels brought
Him ease, and in yon Brighter Day
His spirit caught.

"His spirit wing'd in angels' care
To Jesus' home
I'd mourn; his body, broken share
To buried gloom
I'd overspread with flow'rets rare
In weeping bloom."

Then go, sweet girl, when morn reveals
He Eastern trust,
Have ready, made of floral smells
And tears unjust,
A lover's wreath. Where lonely steals
O'er Oscar's dust

The wild bird's melody—"O'er what?
And is he gone?"
Two lonesome days have kissed the spot
Where deep, alone,
His body lies in venom's rot.
His spirit done

With cumbrous earth, by winged love
Supported well,
Has gently flown to plains above.
O can you tell
How glad he is in yonder grove
Of asphodel?

At this, a trembling change of hues,
Nor like surprise
Awakes, nor iron fears diffuse,
But like the dyes
Of awe, o'erdanced her face. The news
Retold, her eyes

In kerchief hide their falling pearls;
The emblems cull'd
For Oscar, hanging from her curls,
Aside are pull'd;
The drooping symbol gently furls
In sadness lull'd.

Good bye!—she faintly said: "Good bye!"
O heavy mist!
O night of pain and woe! to die
Can but resist
A sorrow. Loud the sylvan sigh:
The Broken Tryst.

HE PAID HIS HONEST DEBTS.

EARTH is gem'd in starry titles,
Hundreds pant for marble names;
Earth is framed in long recitals,
Thousands live to rank as Fame's;
Earth is rocked in Honor's kisses,
Millions work for epithets:
There's no fame so good as this is:
Reuben paid his honest debts.

Aimed he not for shining glory
Found in Legislative halls;
Nor to live in future story
Built on deed in legal walls:
Not with them who fought for freedom,
Did he wish for epaulets;
But in fame he sure did lead'em,
Reuben paid his honest debts.

Lived he not in silver palace
Where the princely favorites dine;
Lipp'd he not the radiant chalice
Full to brim of royal wine;
Walked he not as golden Astor
Snugly wrapt in gold regrets;
But he wore an honor vaster,
Reuben paid his honest debts.

Home he had, but poorly furnished:
Broadcloth never hid his back;
None of his were highly burnished,
Walking proud in fashion's track;
Wife he had, but labor won her
From the pride that ease begets;
Yet how enviable the honor,
Reuben paid his honest debts.

Genius failed to smile upon him,
Virtue scarce availed to rule;
Learning never chanced to crown him,
Little had he been to school;
Tho' above the ignoramus,
Far below the higher wits;
Yet we call him nobly famous,
Reuben paid his honest debts.

Good and social as a neighbor,
  True and happy as a friend;
Noble in the sweat of labor
  Thro' the Spring to Winter's end;
While the weeping world presented
  Hearts in sad financial frets,
With this bone was he contented,
  Reuben paid his honest debts.

Congress will not put the greener
  Laurel on the mortal brow;
War is not the bright arena
  Where the purer olives grow;
In the orb of humble duty
  There's a fame that never sets;
His will ever shine in beauty,—
  Reuben paid his honest debts.

Thus he lived the honored mortal,
Humble, yet his life was rare;
Thus he gained the shining portal—
Gained a sweet admission there.
Famous there for endless ages,
Wearing glory's coronets;
Purest fame on mortal pages,
Reuben paid his honest debts.

"DEM COLLEGE GALS."

1875.

A MONTH ago this classic range
Was drowned in dullness hot and strange,
But now a life is in LaGrange,—
Who caused this bright and sudden change?
"Dem college gals."

When cooling airs refuse to lave
And wings of mirth in dust clouds wave;
When silence makes the town her cave,
Who wake to life this lonesome grave?
"Dem college gals."

When fires of dying Summer seize
And pull the clerks to court house trees
To find a shade of—gnats and fleas,
Who bring a sweet, awakening breeze?
"Dem college gals."

When dusty eyes of traffic doze
And trade has quit her tidal flows,
When all the Square is blue, morose,
Who brighten up the trade?—of hose?
"Dem college gals."

When all the gold of Autumn's gone
And winter brings the silver on,
Who show us roses gayer blown
Than roses in a summer lawn?
"Dem college gals."

When morning smiles or evening lowers
And they arm-linked in twos or fours
Come laughing by the waiting stores,
Who move the clerks to crowd the doors?
"Dem college gals."

But now suppose, when they go by
In looks as bright as yonder sky;
The clerk was forced to turn his eye
And never look; then who would die?
"Dem college gals."

On Sabbath when the day is fair
Who bright attend the House of Prayer
And draw a score of sinners there
That else had wandered otherwhere?
"Dem college gals."

Who bend to hear the sermon thro'
And lose it in a nasal blow?
Who steal the smiling interview
And hate her who reports they do?
"Dem college gals."

Who "wake their souls in joyful lays"
But think of what that smiling says?
Who "sing the great Redeemer's praise"
But love the young man's frequent gaze?
"Dem college gals."

When neither wicked rules detain,
Nor work in zephyr, straw or brain,
Who love the street, the wood, the lane
And beat to death a circus train?
"Dem college gals."

When Springtime weaves a petal bow'r
And evening lends an idle hour,
Who can the most green plums devour
And sweeter get instead of sour?
"Dem college gals."

What makes our burial-ground so sweet?
When Sunday eves in beauty greet,
What makes it such a nice retreat?
In passing there his eye can meet
"Dem college gals."

"How proud he struts! the height of brass!
He comes to show the *self* he has."
But now suppose him stopped,—alas!
Then who would die to have him pass?
"Dem college gals."

When seasons give the college hall
To music's brilliant festival,
Does music draw the young men all?
They answer to a sweeter call,
"Dem college gals."

What graces would they rather see
Than hear the tedious piano key?
What beauties to their natures be
More charming than the harmony?
"Dem college gals."

Who love to make a bright and fair
Appearance in the footlight's glare,
The centre of a happy stare
But hate to if no boys are there?
"Dem college gals."

What forms can make as fair a show
As mortals dream or angels know?
What smiles can change the man to beau
And pull him anywhere they go?
"Dem college gals."

When all his soul is turned to lead,
His joys all gone, his hopes all fled,
His vows all numbered with the dead,
With whom will raise his heart and head?
"Dem college gals."

But when the hopeful grows the pert
In hope secure—from dreams of hurt,
Who wring him in a rigid flirt
Like laundry maidens do—a shirt?
"Dem college gals."

Who soon will quit the college *gum*
And honey make in some sweet home?
Who'll glad the earth, as angels come
To drive the cold and bring the bloom?
"Dem college gals."

Who'll go to light the world and drop
The morning on the larks of hope?
Who'll go to raise the drooping up
And mix for joy the purer cup?
"Dem college gals."

Who'll go some mortal pains to lace
In threads of holy love and grace?
Who'll go with smiling heart and face
To laugh in some domestic vase?
"Dem college gals."

Who'll go and plant themselves abroad
Sweet roses on life's valley road?
Who'll drown some sorrow, lift some load,
And sing of love and sing of God?
"Dem college gals."

We want our town to take a stand
Among the cities of the land:
Then let her use the tools at hand,
Her own immortal college and
"Dem college gals."

2387361

SENIOR-CLASS PARTING SONG.

KINDLY hard the pleasing fetters
Thrown around our sister hearts
While we pierced the realm of letters,
Sought the pure, scholastic arts.
Long the days but full containing
Pleasures numberless and long;
Good the weeks of good restraining,
Full of friendships iron-strong.

Roughly tried in meek endeavor,
Join'd, we mutual burdens bore;
Daily toiling—weary never—
For the deep and precious lore.
Thro' the rigid Junior season,
Thro' the year of Senior bloom,
Thro' the vales of thought and reason,
Well rewarded we have come.

Application, blessed creature,
  Born to help the willing child,
Banished every hideous feature
  Beautified each weedy wild.
Patiently she helped us ravel
  Error's knittings firmly made,
And to nought we raised a cavil
  For we knew she'd gladly aid.

Close around the bright Urania,
  Mistress of the starry page,
Many a time the "Heavenward" mania
  And the philosophic rage
Linked our minds in pleasing wonder
Over Truth and her abode,
  Linked our minds to jointly ponder
Truth and her resplendent God.

Oft our souls in high devotion
Bowed at Clio's holy throne;
Oft we drank the sacred potion
Mixed by Clio for her own.
Lovely matron! oft she fed us
On the warm historic bread,
Thro' tradition's garden led us,
Garden of the rosy spread.

Every bright and merry morning,
Every gay and beauteous eve,
Where the flow'rets—joy's adorning—
Where the roses interweave,
Where the music, deep, harmonic
River laves a fairy bank,
Gathered we and long the tonic,
Silver eddies gayly drank.

Caught me drops of inspiration,
  Golden bits of perfect worth,
When we poured the rich libation,
  Poured Euterpe's praises forth.
Of the holy Nine the sweetest,
  Creature of the happier soul,
For our maiden praise the meetest,—
  O! we loved her sweet control.

Hand to hand in work delighting;
  Mind to mind in duty's call;
Heart to heart in friendship's plighting;
  Soul to soul in frolic's hall.
Science, tongues, the diamond treasures,
  All the nice and lighter parts
Tried we jointly: joint the pleasures
  Gushing from our kindred hearts.

Thus together have we rounded
Well the hard curriculum;
Thus together have we founded
Fabrics for the years to come;
Building, we have sought the timber
Free of premature decay,
Strong and firm in life's December
As in life's Elysian May.

Sisters, now the happy union
(O, the tearful moment now!)
And the grandly sweet communion
Breaks before the parting vow.
Hands united—now must sever,
Kindred faces disunite;
But our mutual hearts will never,
Never break their sacred plight.

Other paths will ope before us,
Other faces, other eyes;
Other sprites will hover o'er us,
Other hopes before us rise:
Other birds in other plumage,
Other trees in other leaves;
Other flow'rs in other bloom-*age*,
Other mornings, other eves.

Life presents a million windings,
Mazy, thorny, rosy, dark;
Life exacts a million bindings;
Life is not a merry park
Where there's nought but laughing roses,
Fairy songs and joyous rills;
Would we have the shining posies?
We must pluck thro' wickered ills.

Here, a passage rough and mazy;
There, a honeysuckle aisle;
Now, a night portentious, hazy;
Then, a gladsome morning smile.
Here, a river wide extending;
There, a sweet inviting shore;
Now, a heavy storm descending;
Then, a rainbow arching o'er.

Now we stop our college ranges,
Now the halcyon day concludes:
Now begin the pointed changes,
Life's prepared vicissitudes.
Let us take them as they meet us—
Heavy, bruising, deep, severe;
Greet the blessings as they greet us,
Catch the sweets as they appear.

Sisters, what our priceless aims are,
This we leave for time to prove;
Sure our bosoms' holy claims are
Each the other's tender love.
Absence need not kill affection;
It should build the spirit up:
Parting strengthens recollection;
Let us often lip her cup!

What if time should keep us parted?
Have we made the final kiss?
Is our hope of meeting thwarted?
Are there other orbs than this?
We shall play the mortal story
Ending neath the dewy sod;
We shall meet and kiss in Glory,
Lilies in the vase of God.

THE FOUNTAIN OF PEACE

OR

WANDERING TOM.

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO A YOUNG LADY FRIEND.

SWEET Angel of Peace! I have only been singing
Of things that I cannot enjoy:
Deep down in my bosom disquiet is ringing,
The lily is falling, and fading the rose,
The yard of my heart is a field of the foes,
Uneasiness wakes to annoy.

Ah, weary and broken and nearly despairing,

I'm plodding a desolate way:

The tropical sunlight is over me glaring,

Too bright for my eyes and too hot for my brain;

O! when shall I see the bright raindrop again?

Will God let me die here to-day?

I came from a happy and beautiful county

Where flowers and maidens are rare;

Where fields in the autumn are mellow in bounty,

Where foot of the troublesome never can come,

Where the heart is at rest and the hope is at home

And life is a thing that is fair.

I think as I look on this desolate barren
Of sweets in the far away cot;
I weep when I think of the dear little Sharon
That gave me my life and my earliest dream;
I weep for the fountain and beautiful stream
That laugh in the sweet native plot.

The dream of my youth was a bright Alabama
Where longings of nature would cease;
Where life ran as light as the wheel of a drama,
Where valleys were laughing in blossoms and gold,
Where streamlets in beauty and loveliness roll'd
Supplied from the Fountain of Peace

O sad was the day I became a believer
In beautiful visions of dreams!
When all of my heart was a runaway-fever,
I bowed at the work to be done for the start,
I smiled at the pain of a foolish old heart
And hurried to follow my schemes.

I think of the tears that I drew from a mother,
A sister's last kiss at the gate,
The sob that my angel was trying to smother—
O God!—in the parlor of her that I loved;
I kissed her, caressed her and softly reproved,
And begged her be true and to wait.

I know that she sits by the window watch keeping
Her spirit bereft of its rest;
I know that her eyes are continually weeping,
I know that she loves me, she loves me like life,
My sweet little Dove and my sworn-to-be wife,
Her love is a thorn in her breast.

My mother and sweet little sister are watching
Adown the white walk to the road;
They look up in tears when the gate is unlatching,
They think that the wanderer ought to be back,
Their spirits recede from a hope, at the lack,
Their hearts are depress'd with the load.

O, pity the heart in a treacherous gloaming,

Led on by the things that betray!

The sweets that I craved in my desolate roaming

Arose on my eyes in illusions of light.—

The dear ones at home arise full on my sight,

Alas! they are hundreds away.

O where is the place where the heart is contented?

O when shall my heart battle cease?

O where is the joy for the soul that's repented?

O where is the palace where pains never come?

I'll go to my mother's—my dear native home,

The queen of that palace is Peace.

The home, the so beautifnl spot of my boyhood,—
Is this my dear mother's old place?
O where is the cottage that comfort and joy woo'd?
The orchard, the arbor, the garden, the pond?
O where are the flowers, the fountain beyond?
My sister, my mother's dear face?

O God!—and they told me the angels had borne her,
My mother, sweet mother, above.
O God! can a runaway reprobate mourn her?
They told me her prayers were daily for me:
I, wayward and sinful, o'er land and the sea
Had wandered nor thought of her love.

My sister—they told me she followed my mother—
O God! and my sister gone too!
They told me she prayed for her runaway brother,
When dying she wanted to see brother Tom;
I, wayward and sinful, had hated my home
Nor thought of my sweet sister Lou.

O where can the spirit find ceasing of sorrow?
I thought gentle Peace brooded here.
O where can the heart for a little while borrow
A balm for its bruises, a down for its rest?
O where is the probe that will enter the breast
And pull out the cruel shot there?

Of course, I loved mother, but never caress'd her,

Nor sent her a letter or smile:

I loved my dear Loulie but seldom I kiss'd her

When kisses were easy, nor lettered her one.

A negligent brother—a negligent son—

O Heaven! relieve me awhile!

I hid me away in the old viny closet;

(My mother and sister were there.)

Ye Whitest of Angels, repose it! repose it!

O lay a son's heart on a pillow of ease!

O quickly a brother's destroyer appease!

O free him from clasping despair!

I saw them:—ah, no; but I knew they were near me;

I heard the soft rustle of wings

As bending they lingered a moment to hear me,

And rising they hurried to carry the pray'r

To One I had known not, a God over there;—

Return, Ye Invisible Things!

They're pleading with God: and I know they're pleading

For a brother and son in distress:

They're begging a cure for his bosom's hot bleeding—

Alas! but the Father has turned them away.

O heart, will thy burden be lifted to-day?

—Nor mother nor sister could bless.

O where is the maiden whose beauty and gladness
Could rid the weak eye of a tear?
Whose voice was a tonic for pining and sadness;
Whose love was a solace, a mellowing sun;
Whose heart was the whitest that love ever won;
Whose home was a Mecca so dear?

My Angel they told me was feeding a fever,
Adown in the flowery vale:
They told me her clay and her spirit would sever
Before the to-morrow could forward its dawn:
They told me her beauty and gladness were gone,
Her visage was dreadfully pale.

O Death! are you stealing this last of my roses,

The one that grew nearest my heart?

O Death! shall I see her before her life closes?

—Her beautiful life was the pride of her life:

The sorrowful death of my sworn-to-be-wife—

O fatal and merciless dart!

I'll go to the dale where my solace is dying

And weep with her sorrowing friends;

I'll go to the bed where my Angel is lying

And put on her bosom the bud of pure snow;

I'll whisper my love in its ardentest flow,

As ebbing her life sweetly ends.

Is this the old gate that I thoughtlessly hung on
When life was a feather of glee?
Is this the long vine that she merrily swung on
When evening had come and the sweetening shade?
Is this the green cedar she happily made
Her daily reminder of me?

O there is the rose I resembled to her and
Its delicate petal of pink
Yet laughingly rocks in a cradle of fur and
Expands for the dew, for the light and the heat,
Is beautiful, tender and charmingly sweet,
Yet fades and is dead at a wink.

Sad mourners I see in the old fashion portal
And some on the rot eaten step;
They look upon me, a disconsolate mortal:
"A stranger to us; and he weeps like a child."—
"O yes, it is Tom: he is wicked and wild;
He's back from his runaway trip."

"But why is he weeping, despairingly weeping?
He knows not the lady so low."
"Ah, may be, a thought of his mother is keeping
A grief in his bosom, a stream in his eyes;
And sorrowful visions of sister arise
To give him a bosom of woe."

My sweet little Dove! (and her name this degree had
When'er life to its budding had come,
And when to my vision her face was a Pleiad
Of wonderful shining.) She opened her eye:
I met it and gave her a smile and a sigh;
She smiled, and she knew it was Tom.

O Tom, have you come back to sweeten my dying?
I'll breathe it out peacefully now.
O down with your handkerchief—stifle your crying
And talk to me, Tom, as my life steals aways,
The morning is passed, and the close of the day
Is bathing my feverish brow.

O never before have I seen the tear falling
Adown your red rose-tinted cheek;
And ne'er for a moment your sunny eye rolling
In water of sadness or meshes of woe;
O, raise up your burden and speak to me now,
I'm low and exceedingly weak.

I thought of you, Tom, when a child of the billow,
I wondered how long you would sail;
I wept for you, Tom, in the shade of yon willow,
And bitterly wept for a voice from the sea;
I prayed for your speedy return unto me,
Return to the flowery vale.

O Tom, I had heard that your prospect was broken,
You wrote me, and said it was true;
I thought you were drooping and sent you a token:
"A heart far away a deep sympathy bears,
A hand far away a dear souvenir wears,"—
I wrote it and sent it to you.

When clouds of the battle were solemnly rising,
And rising the furious hum;
When dogs of disquiet, the peaceful despising,
Were howling and mad in the valley of peace,
I prayed for your life and implored your release,
I thought of you, wept for you, Tom.

Your mother, sweet mother, was lonely decaying,

I lent her a full, ready hand;

She suffered for bread and was often found praying

For competent food or the peace of the grave;

I gave her my care and the food I could save,

And over her suff'ring I lean'd.

Your sister, fair sister, was needing some dresses,

I bought 'em and gave 'em to her;

I gave her my love and my gentlest caresses,

When sick, I was with her and staid in her room;

I brought her sweet flowers to banish her gloom,

Such buds as the dying prefer.

O sad was my heart on that fair, fatal morning !

The night had wrought deadlier harms:

The bosoms of loved ones were mournfully burning;

They thought of the life and the death of sweet Lou.

She prayed for her brother, prayed sweetly for you,

And peacefully died in my arms

We laid her away in the shade of the cedar,

I laid on her coffin, a wreath;

The angels were there as we peacefully hid 'er,

And carried her image to parlors of bliss.

Her life was a lily, her life was a kiss,

She lived an Elysian breath.

I loved her too much, and the midnight exposure

Implanted in me this disease;—

O let me be buried in Loulie's enclosure!

Twin roses in life and twin roses in death,

Twin roseate blooms in the Heavenly wreath,

Twin loves in the Garden of Ease.

O Tom, I am hurt at your pitiful sobbing,—

Uncover your manlier brow!

Be cheerful to me for my bosom is throbbing

Its final farewell to the world and to you:

Oh, open those eyes so entrancingly blue,

And look on me, smile on me now!

My sweet little Dove, I am solemnly fearful
The angels are calling you home;
This load on my bosom, I can not be cheerful;
Its weight is enlarged by your cheerful request:
Impossible now for my spirit to rest;—
My heart is a dungeon of gloom.

When, off on the wave of the galloping ocean
I lay on a pillow of wood,
I dreamed of the heart of a purer devotion,
I dreamed of the figure so beauteous and hale:
I woke and remembered the flowery vale,
The maiden so fair and so good.

When, on the red plain where the gallant men perished,
The token from you I received,
It lifted my spirit—'twas lovingly cherished;
Like springs in a desert to thirsty and tired,
It lifted my drooping, new courage inspired,
My desperate longing relieved.

My sweet little Dove, I have recklessly wandered
In search of the Fountain of Peace;
The more I have sought it and over it pondered
The darker disquiet has grown in my soul,
And stronger and blacker has grown her control,
And weaker my hope of release.

My heart was for peace; but, departed—"O whither,
O whither has gentle Peace flown?"
I thought of my birth place and quickly came hither:
But nothing was seen of the sacred old cot,
The crib and the fences were dying in rot,
My mother and sister were gone.

Despairing, I thought of the beautiful dwelling
Where often at evening I strayed,
Where flowers delighted in kindly dispelling
The cloud from the brow and the cloud from the heart,
Where snowy-wing'd pleasure effected her art
And frolicsome jollity played.

And here is the nice little home in the valley;

And here is the clover-dressed lawn,

The field where the youth of the school used to rally;

And yonder the orchard—and yonder the vine;

The Charm of the valley, that Jewel of mine—

A moment, and you will be gone!

O Tom, is it Peace, the delectable Calmer?

Her fountain is higher than earth;

It leaps in the sunshine of God's Alabama:

Its pleasures are kept for the humble and true,

And, Tom, they will never be given to you

Till after a spiritual birth.

Now, Tom, I am dying—the daylight is fading;
The Monster and angels have come:
My face they are shading—their pinions are shading—
O Jesus, receive me!—my Father—my God!—
O, bring them along to the peaceful Abode,
My papa and mamma and Tom!

"And Tom"—O the sacred and earnest petition!
It knocks at my bosom of pride:
O heart! let it bow thee in humble contrition!
My sweet little Dove was of excellence made;
She lived and she laughed and she wept and she pray'd,
In whispers of glory she died.

She led me to God; she will lead me to Heaven:

The war of my bosom will cease.

To me the sweet harp of the praiser is given:

Her life was my life and her death was my life:

My Guardian Angel, my sworn-to-be wife,

She taught me the Fountain of Peace.

FINIS.

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